Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for the last three years is as follows:—

Waiting list for landline and mobile connections

As one	Landline	Mobile
30.9.2003	18,89,433	*
30.9.2004	17,12,076	*
30.9.2005	16,78,601	14,27,931

*Waiting list for mobile connections was not maintained earlier.

(b) In case of fixed line connections, BSNL is providing them on demand in most of the urban areas. However, in some rural areas, BSNL's telecom network is not available in far flung locations to cater to the scattered demand. In most of these areas, laying of telecom network is techno commercially not feasible. As regards mobile telephones release of connections has been controlled due to capacity constraints in some circles.

(c) Some of the steps taken by BSNL to provide telephone connections in such areas are as follows:—

(i) It has been planned to cover all Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in the country by deploying Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) systems in a big way.

(ii) The norms for laying cable of external plant have been relaxed to 5 Kms against the earlier standard of 2.5 Kms. in places where sizable demand can be catered by this relaxation.

(iii) In case of cellular mobile services, release of connection in some circles is being temporarily controlled due to capacity constraints and to provide trouble free services.

(iv) BSNL is in process of augmenting the cellular mobile capacity. The present waiting list is likely to be cleared by the end of current financial year.

Telephone facility in Jharkhand villages

†1677. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether telephone facility has since been provided in all the villages of Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government have fixed any target in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) So far telephone facility has been provided in 26,934 villages of Jharkhand. District-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below)

(c) Most of the remaining villages are in remote and inaccessible areas and coverage with landline was not feasible in most cases.

(d) and (e) The remaining 1,644 villages shall be provided with Village Public Telephones (VPTs) with support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USO). This excludes villages having less than 100 population and those lying in deep forest/naxalite areas etc. These VPTs will be based on WLL/Satellite connectivity and will be provided by November, 2007. District-wise details are given in the above-mentioned Statement.

Statement

District-wise list of covered and uncovered villages in Jharkhand State

Sl. No.	District	No. of villages provided with telephone facility	Villages planned on WLL/DSPT as per USO agreement.
1	2	3	4
1.	Bokaro	489	0
2.	Dhanbad	1,254	0
3.	Dumka	2,384	85
4.	Pakur	1,051	50
5.	Godda	1,419	137
6.	Jamtara	950	0
7.	Sahebganj	1,141	153
8.	Deoghar	2,219	0

1	2	3	4
9.	Chatra	1,361	3
10.	Hazaribagh	1,609	3
11.	Kodarma	309	238
12.	Giridih	2,263	328
13.	Garwa	689	59
14.	Palamu	1,876	35
15.	Latehar	82	182
16.	Ranchi	2,005	10
17.	Lohardaga	280	72
18.	Gumla	621	140
19.	Simdega	601	11
20.	East Singhum	1,637	25
21.	West Singhum/Saraikela	2,694	133
	TOTAL:	26,934	1,664

VRS for group 'C' & 'D' workers in MTNL

1678. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) has offered Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to its group 'C' and 'D' workers in the years 2004 and 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the salient features of the voluntary retirement benefits offered to the workers;

(c) the number of workers of MTNL who have so far opted for VRS:

(d) whether MTNL proposes to make VRS more attractive to enable more workers to opt for it; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir, MTNL had introduced VRS for its Non-Executive employees in financial year 2004-05.

(b) **Details of VRS scheme**

(i) The scheme was introduced on 4.12.2004.